

A MESSAGE TO ALL NEBRASKANS

BE AWARE. PREPARE.

Pandemic flu can spread quickly and is life-threatening to people of all ages. You should be aware of the risks and what you can do to best care for yourself, your family and your community.

- Be informed. Pay attention to pandemic flu news. Review the Web sites on the back of this brochure.
- Follow advice from health officials.
- Stay up-to-date on all your immunizations, especially on flu and pneumonia shots.
- Get involved. Help your community prepare for pandemic flu.

HAVE A FAMILY PLAN.

- Talk with family and relatives about how they would be cared for if they got sick, or what's needed to care for them at home.
- Talk with your doctor about getting an extra supply of your regular prescription drugs.
- Have non-prescription drugs and other health supplies on hand, such as pain relievers, cough and cold medicines.
- Have an extra supply of food and water. (6 weeks' worth).
- In a pandemic, many people may get sick at the same time, so think about how you will manage if everyday life is severely disrupted.
- Discuss and practice general protection measures:
 - Cover cough, wash hands, stay home when sick.
 - Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth.
 - Consider purchasing masks for family members to help protect against germs.
 - Make sure your family knows how to prepare and cook food properly.

For more information and checklists specific to individuals, families, businesses, schools, faith-based organizations and communities go to:

www.hhss.ne.gov/pandemic

PANDEMIC FLU RESOURCES

www.hhss.ne.gov/pandemic
NE Health & Human Services System
e-mail: birdflu@hhss.ne.gov
telephone: (402) 471-2937

Your local health department is also a good resource for pandemic flu information. For contact information, visit: www.hhss.ne.gov/lhd

www.pandemicflu.gov
The official U.S. government Web site on pandemic flu

www.cdc.gov
Centers for Disease Control & Prevention

www.usda.gov
U.S. Department of Agriculture

www.nwhc.usgs.gov
National Wildlife Center

Looking for someone to talk to your group about pandemic flu? Nebraska Center for Biopreparedness Education is working with HHSS on a speakers' bureau. For more information, visit their Web site at: www.bioprep.org, or call (402) 552-2529.

NEBRASKA HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES SYSTEM



Helping people live better lives through effective health and human services.

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P A N D E M I C

FLU



WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

There is no pandemic flu in the world today, but there have been three pandemics in the last 90 years. Flu experts worldwide agree another deadly pandemic is a real possibility. Bird flu is the most likely candidate and experts fear this virus could change and set off the next human pandemic.

ALL NEBRASKANS
SHOULD BE PREPARED

• WHY SHOULD I WORRY ABOUT PANDEMIC FLU?

Pandemic flu strikes quickly and spreads fast

- Pandemic flu can be highly contagious, spreading rapidly from person to person. Many people would get sick; many could die.
- Healthcare services would be in demand, but providers might be in short supply.
- Pandemic flu could severely disrupt everyday life.
- Currently, there's no vaccine available. When there is, there wouldn't be enough for everyone.

Medical supplies would be limited

Although the federal government stocks medicines, vaccines and medical equipment, they would be in short supply. People who perform essential services, such as healthcare providers, would receive medication and vaccine first.

Quarantine might be required

Quarantine (separating people from others) might be used to protect the public during a pandemic. It's possible that schools and businesses would close and public events would be cancelled. Health officials might ask people to stay home.

**EACH OF US SHOULD BE PREPARED
TO TAKE CARE OF OURSELVES,
OUR FAMILIES AND OUR NEIGHBORS.**

• WHY IS PANDEMIC FLU MORE SERIOUS THAN SEASONAL FLU?

Pandemic flu is not the same as seasonal flu. Here's the difference:

Seasonal (or common) flu

- Occurs every year during the winter.
- Affects 5-20% of the population.
- Most people have some immunity.
- For most people it is unpleasant but not life-threatening.
- People who are very young, very old, and/or have certain chronic illnesses are most at risk of serious illness.
- A vaccine is usually available.
- Antiviral drugs help treat those at risk and those who are sick.

Pandemic flu

- Can occur any time of the year. Has occurred three times in the last 90 years.
- May affect 30% or more of the population.
- People have little or no natural immunity.
- Is often life-threatening.
- Everyone could be at risk of serious illness.
- A vaccine is currently not available.
- Antiviral drugs are likely to be in limited supply during a pandemic.

Vaccine against seasonal flu will not protect against pandemic flu. However, getting your yearly flu shot is one of several things you can do to keep yourself healthy, and that may help you fight off a pandemic flu virus.

• HOW IS NEBRASKA PREPARING?

The Nebraska Health and Human Services System (HHSS) is preparing for pandemic flu and has developed a state pandemic flu plan. The state plan outlines HHSS' response to a pandemic along with guidelines for distributing vaccine and antiviral medication. The plan focuses on protecting Nebraskans and saving lives.

Local health departments are developing and testing plans for their communities as well. HHSS is working with local health departments to coordinate preparedness efforts at every level.

HHSS is also:

- Testing emergency response plans.
- Helping people, businesses and communities prepare for pandemic flu.
- Increasing supplies of medicine that may lessen the severity of pandemic flu.
- Planning to keep essential supplies coming into the state during an outbreak.

ANNUALLY, AN ESTIMATED 36,000

people in the United States die from complications related to seasonal flu.

1918 SPANISH FLU

killed 50 to 100 million people worldwide, including about 500,000 people in the United States.

1957 ASIAN FLU AND 1969 HONG KONG FLU

killed nearly 2 million people combined.

21ST CENTURY PANDEMIC FLU

Based on the Spanish Flu, researchers project the next pandemic flu could claim millions of lives in the United States and worldwide.



1900

1950

2000